

Preparation For Service

Dr. Dennis Leatherman

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Mountain Lake Independent Baptist Church

1005 Broadford Road
Oakland, MD 21550

Website: www.mlibc.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/mlibc

Very very long service, very very long message or if I just give the opening remarks of it, it'll be a very very short message. I said which of the two do you think everybody would like? Very very long one and very very short one? And I'm not going to tell you which one it is.

Now I'm just going to give you the few thoughts and we'll extend this out over two weeks. The thing is with David and this is what I think is happening as I'm studying, the thing is with David somebody of David's caliber does not just happen overnight, and what I'm finding as I'm studying to get to be a man after God's own heart, God's doing a lot of preparation, there's a lot of work that needs to be done, there's a lot of, I'm going to whenever we get to that part, I think I'm going to refer to it as courses that David had to take growing up in different areas to develop him into the man that God could use to the extent that he did. And so it's fascinating and I hope I can convey a little bit what the Lord, what I'm getting out of it.

But 1 Samuel 16. I want to begin reading in verse 14. I'm not going to actually, these verses here aren't going to really tie in today yet but it'll get us started. Verse 14, 1 Samuel 16, "But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul," let me make sure I'm turned on here. Am I good, Dane? I think so. Verse 14,

14 But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him. 15 And Saul's servants said unto him, Behold now, an evil spirit from God troubleth thee. 16 Let our lord now command thy servants, which are before thee, to seek out a man, who is a cunning player on an harp: and it shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well. 17 And Saul said unto his servants, Provide me now a man that can play well, and bring him to me. 18 Then answered one of the servants, and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite

Now look at his description of David here, look how this man who apparently doesn't really know David other than, you know, just superficially, but look at his description of him.

the Bethlehemite, that is cunning in playing, [look at this] and a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and prudent in matters, and a comely person, [and I underlined in red this last phrase,] and the LORD is with him.

Boy, what a testimony. I wonder how many of us, people would describe us as somebody, "Boy, the Lord is with that person." That's how they described David.

19 Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep. 20 And Jesse took an ass laden with bread, and a bottle of wine, and a kid, and sent them by David his son unto Saul. 21 And David came to Saul, and stood before him: and he loved him greatly; and he became his armourbearer. 22 And Saul sent to Jesse, saying, Let David, I pray thee, stand before me; for he hath found favour in my sight. [Now look at this,] 23 And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, [look at this,] and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him.

Did you notice there the influence of music? Now that's a whole other subject but I want to touch on it, just highlight it, point it out while we're here. Here's an evil spirit from the Lord is on Saul, now however that affected him we can't say for certain, but when David played the music and the type of music he played, it had a profound effect upon Saul and upon that evil spirit. I put in the margin of my Bible and you might want to just jot this down, I put down music affected Saul physically, emotionally and spiritually. Physically, emotionally and spiritually, now that's a whole other subject but don't ever let anybody tell you that music in and of itself is neutral in its influence. It is not. Music can and does, has either a positive influence or a negative influence depending on the style and the type of music, and it's designed to effect us one way or another. And so that's a whole other subject.

But let's have a word of prayer and we'll look at the message is "Preparation for Service." I'm not going to get probably to that part of the message but let's pray.

Father, I thank you for David all these thousands of years later and Israel is still looking for the King to sit on David's throne. Lord, what an amazing amazing man, and we ask now that you would, I ask now that you would help me and through me teach us about David and I pray that you would incorporate into my life and to all of us as Christians the characteristics, these positive characteristics of David that made him so useful and so attractive to you. Lord, whatever took place that prepared him and molded him into being that man after your own heart, I ask, Lord, with a little trepidation that you would put us through those same processes, help us take those same courses, so that we can be men and women after your own heart similar to David. So please fill me with your Spirit. I present my body anew and ask that you would teach and preach and speak to us through me. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

One thing I get looking at Saul's downfall and an important part of David coming onto the scene is understanding Saul's, King Saul's downfall. And King Saul's downfall would be what? What would you say? One word to summarize what caused King Saul to fall? Pride, and we've touched on that a number of times now. It's so obvious. I believe with all my heart that the greatest hindrance to growing spiritually is pride. Is pride. And the greatest hindrance to be used of God, now this is a Wednesday night crowd so I'm going to make the assumption that all of us want God to use us, right? In one capacity or another we want our God, our Creator, to use us to advance the gospel and influence this world for Christ, be a help to others, and the greatest hindrance to influencing others in a positive way is pride. Pride.

Now what do we mean by pride? By pride we mean thinking too highly of ourselves, thinking that we are something we are not, thinking that we are more than what we are not. Pride would include focusing too much on myself and all classes of society, all levels of Christian maturity, all levels, we all struggle with pride. The new Christian struggles with pride. The seasoned Christian struggles with pride. Right or wrong? Anybody here has ever said, "Preacher, I never deal with pride at all"? Anybody give a testimony? We all do. If somebody raised their hand, I was going to sit down and let you come up here and tell us how you do that. Thinking too highly of myself, "Boy, I'm really something." Do you know what I've found out? When trial comes or temptation comes or something like that comes my way, more often than I care to admit, I find out I'm not as strong a Christian as I thought I was. Can I get a witness? Don't all look at me so piously there. We're not nearly as strong a Christian. How many people ever responded this way, "Goodnight, I thought I was better than that"? Anybody know what I'm talking about?

Pride. We fool ourselves into thinking more highly of ourselves than we should, focusing too much on ourselves, or being too self-confident. You say, "Preacher, it's good to be self-confident." No, I want to suggest to you we should not be self-confident, we should be Christ-confident. I'm going to give you some verses here in a minute. What I want to do just briefly and quickly, if you would, find 2 Corinthians, now keep your place here because we're going to look at a verse here before we get to 2 Corinthians, but while I'm talking about the first one, you can be finding 2 Corinthians 3. But what I want to do is just very very quickly compare the attitude of two men that went by the name of Saul. One was a total failure and the other was a phenomenal success, I mean spiritually in the kingdom of God and the service of God. And what was it that made King Saul such a failure and the Apostle Paul, who was Saul, but the Apostle Paul such a strong powerhouse for God? What was the difference?

1 Samuel 15, if you would, come back there and verse 17 tells us Saul's attitude about himself. 1 Samuel 15:17, Samuel is speaking to Saul and look at this statement he makes to Saul. He says, "When thou wast," in other words, this is past tense, this is the way you were, "When thou wast," what? "Little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel?" Now the tense of Samuel's statement there indicates, what? That at one point Saul was very little in his own sight. He was great in God's sight. God spoke very highly of him early on and King Saul was very little in his own sight, but he says it in such a way that it tells us that that is no longer true, right? So Saul developed an

attitude over a period of time, he developed the attitude that he was not little in his own sight but he was, what? Great in his own sight. And you see that played out in his arrogance and he steps in and takes the role of a priest when he had no authority to do that, and he begins telling Samuel what he should and should not do, the prophet of God. And Saul over a period of time and perhaps because of successes and how God was using him, was no longer little in his own sight but he became convinced that he was somebody. He became convinced that he really was a great great man, "I am somebody." And it was his downfall and it's what destroyed him.

Now if you would, come over to 2 Corinthians 3 and here we have not King Saul but we have the Apostle Paul, and notice his attitude about himself. I'm going to begin reading, and I could go to any number of verses but I just chose this one, 2 Corinthians 3:4, "And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward," now look at this, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is," what? "Of God." Look at this, "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament." Would you agree with me that's the exact opposite attitude than what King Saul had? And it's interesting if you do a study, and this is where I find such great encouragement from Saul's statement here, Paul's statement here encourages me tremendously, particularly being in the ministry, he says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves." That word "sufficient" comes from the same word we get our word "competent." Now think about that, he's saying, the Apostle Paul is saying, "I'm not competent. I am incompetent for this position." Anybody here ever get in a situation where you've felt totally incompetent? "This is over my head. This is beyond my pay-grade. I can't do this. I am not competent for this. I am insufficient for this." Paul said that's the way he felt. How many people, like me, that's encouraging? If Paul felt that way, goodnight.

But then he doesn't stop there, he goes on and explains why he's being used of God. He says, "I'm not competent. I'm not sufficient for this. This is way over my head." Look what he says, "to think any thing as of ourselves," he says we don't think highly of ourselves, we don't see this, "but our sufficiency is," what? "Of God," and he says, "Who also hath made us able," competent, "ministers of the new testament." Paul's whole attitude was, and we're going to see this in David a little later on, his whole attitude was, "No, I am not sufficient for what God has called me to do but I'm not trusting in me, I'm trusting in the Lord and the Lord enables me." And I've seen it so many times over the years where somebody, God's leading somebody to do something or somebody will come to me and say, "Pastor, I think maybe God's directing me to do this but I can't do that. I'm not able to do that. I'm not competent." They might not use that word but, "I'm not competent to do what I think God's calling me to do." And what the answer to that is, that's a good way to be. That's the right attitude. We are not sufficient of ourselves. It has to be of God. It has to be God doing it.

I remember the first time I experienced this that I was aware of, I guess, maybe I had before, but many times since, but it was my first year traveling as Neighborhood Bible Time, I got out to training early, Brother Holmes asked me to come out a week early because I was such a great preacher and tremendous guy. No, he needed someone to print ribbons. So he had me come out early and the whole training, it's three weeks' training, I

got a week early, so the week before and the first two weeks of training on knowing what to do when you actually go out, I was in the backroom printing ribbons on an old letterpress. Ching, ching, one at a time. So finally he said, "Leatherman, I'm sending you out next week. You're going to," he didn't tell us where, he said, "I'm sending you out and this is your partner." I said, "Sir, I didn't get any training. I have no idea what I'm doing." "Ah, you'll be fine." So I said, "Can I at least get in the last week of it?" And he says, "Alright." So I got in and I crammed everything in in one week's time and he sent us out to Grand Junction, Colorado. We flew over the mountains, landed there, and it's a first time church and I thought that was bad at first because nobody there knew what they were doing, but it was actually good because they didn't know that I didn't know what I was doing and so it worked out beautifully.

But Monday night, we were preaching on hell and my partner said, "Why don't you preach?" And I said, "Man, I've been printing ribbons the whole time. I don't know what I'm doing." He said, "Ah, you'll be fine." And I preached and I'm saying all this to God's glory because I was so incompetent, I was so insufficient for that, and I preached and I'm telling you, it was one of those times where the presence of God showed up in such a powerful way. Does anybody know what I'm talking about? I mean, the presence of God was there and teenagers, probably about 45-50 teens, they're at the altar and kids getting saved, and it was like I didn't even know what happened. I just preached and it was like God took over. And the youth pastor came up and he said, "Man, that was incredible. That was incredible." And I was just dumbfounded and I said, "That was God. That was God."

And I think that's what Paul is talking about. He says, "I'm not that, I'm not sufficient, I'm not capable of this, I'm not competent to do this, but I'm trusting God and God will do it if I will just trust him, put myself in his hands." And that, I believe, is such a key to understanding David and that his total trust, his total faith, his total confidence was not in him, it was in the Lord. You read through the Psalms and things David would say, "I'm scared to death," he would say stuff like that. He said, "I'm in the pits. I'm in distress but thou, O Lord, art my help, thou, O Lord, art my confidence, thou, O Lord, art my shield, thou, O Lord, art my rock, my defense, my strong tower." Not one time do you find David saying, "I can defend myself." Not one time do you find David saying, "I am like a rock." He never says that. Whenever he's referring to himself, almost without exception, I can think of no exceptions really, never does he refer to himself in any other way than a weak, fearful, desperately needy man that needs God to do it. Then we see God says, "Bingo, that's the guy that has my heart, that totally trusts me, totally depending on me, and I can do great things through that person."

So God's not looking for great people, God's not looking for highly skilled people, God's not looking for very very confident people necessarily, but God is looking for people who will trust him and trust him completely, let him do the work through them. And so you look at King Saul and you look at Apostle Paul and you see these two contrasts and I look at that and I see, "Ah, now I understand David a little bit. I understand David a little bit."

Before we start thinking too highly of ourselves, this past week, not this week, last week and I don't know what exactly was going on in my head, I hardly ever know what's going on in my head, but something was going on and I thought something and I thought, "I'd better be careful because God used a donkey to accomplish his will. He really doesn't need me if he can use a donkey." There's lots of donkeys around, I mean, just go out to the Harvey's, they'll sell you one. Then I got thinking about that, not only did God use a donkey to accomplish his will but what are some other, can you think of other things that God used that might not be so flattering that God used to accomplish his will? A rooster. Yeah, with Peter. I mean, God can use a rooster. You say, "Well, I'm really something. God's using me." Well, he used a donkey and a rooster. Anything else you can think of? A raven. That was what I thought of and a raven is nasty, you know, I mean, can you imagine eating food that a raven dropped off? I mean, they're out in the road eating a possum and they bring you some food? Anything else? A whale.

So we've got to keep in mind, it's not me, it's the Lord, and if a soul is getting saved or a life is being impacted or the gospel is expanding, don't think, "Oh, I'm really something. God's doing..." Or I shouldn't think this way, "I'm really doing something. I'm really amazing." Well, you need to stop and remember maybe I'm just not much more than a donkey and God's the one that's doing it all, and God's the one using me. And so we have to be very very careful about that.

Dale sang the song, "Jesus paid it all." There's a little phrase in there, when he sang it, I quick jotted it down, it reminded me when I was in Bible college and God was leading me and directing me and I could see kind of where God was directing me and I was scared to death of it, and I thought, "That is not me. There's no way I can do that." And we sang that song one time and a little phrase out of that song caught my attention and I used to sign my letters with it. I don't know if my wife remembers it or not but I used to sign them this, "Child of weakness." That little phrase in there, "Oh, child of weakness, watch and pray," and I used to sign that, I'm nothing but a child of weakness, that's what I am.

So pride is such a hindrance to us being used of God, to us growing spiritually as we focus on ourselves, this obsession with ourselves, this confidence in ourselves, and we need to get over that and David was able to get over that. The more proud Saul became, the more useless he became until finally he got to the point where he had to be replaced and God said, "I'm done. I can't do anything with him. He's so obsessed with himself. He's so stubborn. He's so rebellious, worse than witchcraft." And that's what pride will do to us, it'll do that to us and finally God said, "I can't use him. He has to be replaced." I put this down: pride is the great disqualifier in God's service. Pride is the great disqualifier in God's service.

Now I want to having said that, I want to make a few observations of the transition from King Saul's administration to King David's administration, what God was doing in making this transition. I know we've kind of talked about this quite a bit but I want to give three more observations. I'll give these real quickly to you. 1. Now we're backed up here a little bit and we're back on the transition process. We looked at Saul. We looked at

David. We see the contrast. We're going to see more about David in the weeks to come but now I want to look at this transition process a little bit.

The first thing I notice here in the transition process, it's a fairly simple process. Moving from King Saul to King David really wasn't complicated. If you would, look at chapter 16 here in 1 Samuel, come back here, and notice verse 4. Chapter 16, 1 Samuel, verse 4. This is basically the summary of the transition from King Saul to King David. Verse 4, 1 Samuel 16, "And Samuel did that which the LORD spake," that's not complicated, right? All Samuel did was just do what God told him to do. He went where God told him to go and he did what God told him to do and the transition took place. That's basically all it was, he just trusted God and followed his instructions.

Here's the thing: God is not a complicated God. God is really pretty simple and basic in his instructions to us. It's not complicated. You know, you see these books and you hear these sermons and you hear people talk about the secret to spiritual success. Did you ever hear any stuff like that? "Oh, here's the secret." There's really no secret. Success in the Christian life, success spiritually, to grow and mature and be the Christian God saved me to be, to be the man God saved me to be is really pretty basic. It just boils down to this: trust God and do what he tells me to do. If I do that, everything is going to be fine.

How does Proverbs 3:5 and 6 put it? "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." "Oh, preacher, how do I know what God's will is?" Just do what he tells you to do. Acknowledge him in all your ways. Every way you go, make sure it's what God says, make sure you're following God's instructions, do what the Bible says and you'll end up exactly where God wants you to be.

So it's a very simple process and I believe the process going from King Saul to King David and going from a defeated Christian and maybe a proud Christian, a self-centered Christian, to a mature, spiritual, Christ-minded Christian is really not complicated. Just what does God tell us to do and then do that, follow his instructions, trust him, and step by step all the way, my Savior leads me. What have I to ask beside? And so I see this process looking at there's no big complicated process and big bureaucratic stuff has to take place and all this. No, he just said, "Samuel, you go where I tell you to go and you do what I tell you to do and we'll have a new king." I can do that.

God's processes are very simple, God's processes are very simple but they're not always very easy, right? That's where the old self-will comes in. How many people agree with me basically it's simple to get saved, right? Very simple, I turn from my sins to Christ, trust him as my Savior, make a conscious decision to put my faith and trust in Christ. Boom, bingo, I'm saved. Very simple. Ah, but it's not always easy and many of us struggled with that and struggled with that and struggled with that before we got saved. So it's not complicated.

So my first observation was this, it was a fairly simple process transitioning from King Saul to King David, from carnal Christian to spiritual Christian, from proud, defeated, out

of the will of God Christian to the Christian in the will of God that's victorious and the person God wants them to be. It's not complicated. It's very simple. Just trust God, do what he says. It may not be easy, in fact, even Samuel struggled with it, we looked at that. But it was simple.

2. I put this down, it was a very sudden transition, and from David's perspective, it was a very sudden promotion. Look at verse 12, "And he sent, and brought him in." Now they're talking about David. David's out there, they've gone through all the brothers and none of them are the one that God's will, said, "Don't you have any others?" "Yeah, there's David out there but, good grief, nobody would want him to be king." He didn't say that but it's implied. And so they sent after him and brought him in. "Now he was ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to." That reminds me of your preacher a little. No, I'm kidding, sorry. "And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he." Now think with me for a minute. What has just happened? Here is David, he got up in the morning, maybe he was sleeping out on the side of the mountain with the sheep, we don't know where he was or where he spent the night, but he got up in the morning and he brushed his teeth and combed his ruddy hair and did whatever he did in the morning. It was just another day, just another day in the life of a young shepherd expecting nothing, anticipating nothing, but more just a full day of shepherding and do shepherd stuff. And lo and behold, in the middle of the day his life is absolutely transformed and takes a completely different direction than he ever anticipated. Just in one day. Just in one day.

And here's the thing and most of us, a lot of us are older, most of us have found our lives can change in a moment. The whole direction of my life can absolutely and completely change like that. When they called David in from the sides of the hill from the sheep, when they called him in, he had no clue what was about to happen to him and how radically different direction his life was about to take, and you see that all through scripture. You see that all through scripture. One day he's a lowly shepherd boy, the next he's an anointed king. One hour he's a lowly shepherd boy, the next he's anointed to be king of Israel.

Over and over in the Bible you read statements like this, "And there was a day. And there came a day." The first thought when I was studying this and the first thought that came into my mind was Job in Job 1. It talks about what a great man Job was and his integrity and his tremendous testimony and his success financial and family success and just God's hand was on him, and then it makes this statement, "And there was a day," when everything changed. When everything changed. I got looking through the gospels and there's statements like this, "And a certain day they brought to Jesus a leper." And wow, his life was changed. "And there was a certain day that a blind man cried out, 'Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!'" And his life was changed forever. "And there was a certain day and there came a day," and lives completely changed. And what I see here is how God can completely alter the direction of our life and we never anticipate it for one second and, boom, everything's different, everything's different.

Take your Bible, if you would, turn with me to Proverbs 27. One of my favorite Proverbs, in fact, every Proverb I read at that moment is my favorite Proverb. Proverbs 27:1. If you don't have this memorized, this would be a really good verse to memorize, and if you don't have it at least underscored in your Bible somewhat, this is a good verse to underscore or highlight somehow in your Bible. Proverbs 27:1. How many folks have this verse committed to memory? Anybody at all? A couple around. Look what it says, "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." Brother, that's true on David. Goodnight. I put in the margin of my Bible, "You never know. You never know."

Now usually or maybe I'm just speaking for myself, but often you see that verse and you think of the negative. You think you'd better get saved. Don't boast yourself of tomorrow because tomorrow you might be, what? Dead. You don't know what a day may bring forth and that's true, that's a true application, but I want to suggest to you there's also a positive application to that. That thing you've been praying for and praying for and praying for and praying for and praying for for years maybe and you thought this is never going to happen, don't get too confident of that, you don't know what a day may bring forth. Tomorrow may be the day that God answers that prayer. Tomorrow may be the day that that person gets saved. Tomorrow could possibly be the day that your situation is changed and the point of the matter is, and we touched on this a little bit on Sunday night, is life is often very unexpected. So many things come in life that we cannot and do not anticipate and God sees them and God plans them and God has it all laid out.

In fact, if you would, look over here, come back to 1 Samuel. This is kind of interesting in verse 1, I'm going to look at this as my last thought here in just a moment. 1 Samuel 16:1, look at the very end of that verse. God says, "for I have provided," past tense, "I have provided me a king among his sons." God already knew who it was. God already, it was going to take place, it was all in place, just nobody knew it. And here's the amazing thing, God already knows what's going to happen tomorrow. We don't. Our life could be totally altered but God's already there, God already knows what's going to happen and that's pretty exciting.

So you never know. The morning I got saved, when I got up on that Monday morning, May 7, 1979, I don't know what time I got up, but when I got up that morning I had no clue, it was the farthest thing in my mind was that when I went to bed that night I would be a Christian, that my life would radically be altered. In fact, at noon that day I had no clue. Supper time that day I had no clue. But when I went to bed that night I was a different person than what got up that morning. And God can do amazing things in a very brief amount of time.

So this happened very suddenly. Boom, all of a sudden there he is. His life is altered. And let me give you my third thought here real quick. Oh, by the way, the application for that thought is that things can change suddenly, a good idea would be to walk pretty close to God. A good idea would be consistent, be consistent in my walk with God. Don't let things deteriorate and don't be hot and then cold, and then hot and then cold spiritually. Better to just stay after it and get on fire for God and keep the fires burning and stay at it

because I have no idea how God may redirect my entire life in just 12 hours, 24 hours' time, so I've got to stay close to the Lord, stay close to the Lord.

Now let me give you my third thought. How many people are glad I went with short version, not long? How many people thought this was the long version?

3. Let me give you my last thought real quick and this is a blessing. It was a fairly simple process, this transition. It was a very sudden promotion on David's part. And I put this down: it was an extremely secure promise. Now come back to verse 1, the last part, "for I have provided me a king among his sons." God said, "This is going to happen. David is going to be the king." God already made his decision up, it just needed everybody to know. Now that's important to understand and that was an important truth that David needed to understand and he forgot. When God says something is so, you and I better mark it down, it's so. And when God says something is going to happen, we better mark it down, it is going to happen. And God told Samuel, the prophet, "I have provided me a king and it is Jesse's son." And when God made that statement, everybody in existence mark it down, David's going to become king. There is no devil in hell that can keep David from becoming king and there's no backslidden king on the throne of Israel that can keep David from becoming king, and he can chase him all around the wilderness all he wants and try and kill him and throw as many javelins at him as he wants to, every single one of them are going to miss because God has decreed David will be king. And that was a secure promise and I repeat again, when God says something is so, it's so. When God says something is going to happen, it's going to happen.

So what's the application? Hey, when you and I trust Christ as Savior, God says, "I give unto them eternal life." Mark it down, we have eternal life. And God says, "They shall never perish." And when God says someone isn't going to perish, you mark it down, they are not going to perish just as sure as David was going to be king. They shall never perish. They shall never perish. And so we have a secure promise as believers, we have a secure promise of God that we are safe and secure. You say, "Oh, that means you have a license to sin. You can go and sin however you want if you're secure in your salvation." It doesn't mean that at all. What it means is I'm a child of God now and God doesn't horse around with sin, and when his children sin, he deals with it. He doesn't send them to hell but he sure does chasten them and he sure does correct them. And I'll tell you, God's chastening can be pretty severe. Hebrews 12, he uses the term "scourging" a child, his child that's living in sin and doing wrong.

So when God says something is so, it's so. We had a fellow I worked with for a while and about every three weeks he would think he wasn't saved. He wouldn't think he lost his salvation, he'd think, "I don't think I'm really saved." What do you mean, "I don't think I'm really saved"? "Well, I just don't think I'm saved." Why not? "Well, I don't know if I meant it when I prayed." Well, why would you not mean it? And about every three weeks we went through this over and over and over and over and I said, "Listen, you're calling God a liar because God says whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," and if you've called on him and you're not saved, then God lied to you. "Well, I'm not calling him a liar, I just don't think I'm saved." And I said, "The issue isn't what you

think, the issue is whether you believe in God or not because when God says something..." And do you know what? God couldn't use that guy much. He couldn't do much with him because he never would take God at his word. He never got that settled and he struggled.

And David, you know, as tremendous a man as David was and he's so far, such a tremendous caliber of man, but he got to a point when Saul was chasing him around and we don't have time to go there since this is the short version, but when Saul's chasing him around, the Bible says a little bit later on, the Bible says that David said to himself in his heart, "I shall one day die at the hand of Saul." And David was wrong. God had said he was going to be king and when David started leaning on his own understanding, and David started and David forgot what God had already anointed him to be, then he goes off to the enemies of God and, man, what a mess he made there. What a mess he made there. So we've got to take God at his word. We've got to believe God.

So that was my introduction to the three courses David took to prepare him to get to the point where God says, "You're the man. I'm going to anoint you to be a king." So come back in two weeks and we'll get the rest of the message. So amen? Simple process. Simple process. Sudden promotion. And a secure promise. And so let's just trust God, do what he says, understand everything could be totally different tomorrow this time, but what God says is so is so, we can trust him. Amen?

Father in heaven, I pray you'd take these thoughts and burn them deep in our hearts and minds that we can walk with you on a daily basis in faith, just trusting you, following your instructions. Lord, we understand that you are God and you can redirect us however you see fit and with or without our consent. And Lord, what you say is so, when you say we're safe and secure, that you will care for us and you will protect us, we believe you, Lord, and we can be sure in that.

With our heads bowed and our eyes closed, I wonder how many this evening would say, "Preacher, I just need to get back the simplicity of my faith. I just need to get back to that simple faith in God when I first got saved and God said it, that was settled, I was just going to trust him and go with it." Are there any like that, say, "Preacher, I need that simplicity of faith once again in my heart and life," any like that? God bless you, hands all around. That's really what we need. How many would say, "Preacher, my walk with God, I need to get that a little closer because like the Bible says, I don't know how things could change and I need to be close to the Lord every minute of every day so that when he redirects, I'm ready and I'm sensitive to that and I'm prepared for that." Is there any like that by the uplifted hand, "I need to walk close to God every day"? God bless you, hands all around. Then this matter of just being confident in that what God says he will do, he will do. Now pride you've got to watch out for that matter of pride. That is so dangerous. Maybe we need to deal with that tonight.

So Father, as we give the invitation, just help us, we pray, Lord, in Jesus' name.

Let's stand together, our heads are bowed and our eyes are closed.